

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EB-03 IO-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4689

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KIGALI POUCH

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUJUMBURA 0085/1

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, BY, US

SUBJECT: GENERAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING UNITED STATES
ECONOMIC AID TO BURUNDI

REF A. STATE 12336; B. BUJUMBURA 695; C. BUJUMBURA A-02;
D. BUJUMBURA 0039; E. STATE 12320; F. BUJUMBURA 618; G. BUJUMBURA 84

1. REF (A) PARA 6 REQUESTED EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL
CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO US DECISION ON UNDERTAKING BILATERAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR BURUNDI. AS DEPT KNOWS FROM MY
REPORTING OVER LAST SIX MONTHS AND FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH
INSPECTORS, I HAVE BEEN BUILDING UP TO A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION
(WITH WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, INSPECTORS CONCURRED). REF (B) POSITED
NOT ONLY A STABLE BURUNDI POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE SHORT AND
MEDIUM TERM, BUT ALSO THE CONCLUSION THAT TUTSI MINORITY RULE WAS
SO FIRMLY IMPLANTED AND SO PROSPECTIVELY ENDURING FOR THE NEXT 5
TO 10 YEARS THAT ONLY AN UPSURGE OF THE ECONOMY COULD PROVIDE
THE EXPANDING HORIZONS THAT MIGHT PERMIT MODERATE AND RELATIVELY
CONCILIATORY TUTSI ELEMENTS TO ARGUE SUCCESSFULLY THAT NEW
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OPPORTUNITIES COULD NOW BE GIVEN TO SOME OF THE HUTU MASSES. (OF

COURSE, IT WILL TAKE SOME ATTENTION IN THE INTERIM TO MAKE SURE THAT THE MORE RADICAL TUTSI ELITE DO NOT RPT NOT APPROPRIATE ALL BENEFITS OF THE NICKEL PROJECT FOR THEIR OWN IMMEDIATE GAIN). REF (C) WHILE DESCRIBING IN DETAIL THE DEPLORABLE STATE OF THE BURUNDI ECONOMY AND THE SMALL IMPACT WHICH FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS HAVE HERETOFORE HAD, NEVERTHELESS ARGUED THAT PROBABLY HEAVY US INVESTMENT IN BURUNDI MINERAL PROJECTS WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, AS WELL AS A MORAL OBLIGATION TO TRY TO DO SOMETHING FOR ONE OF THE POOREST OF THE POOR, DICTATED A START TO BILATERAL US AID.

2. NOTHING HAS SINCE CHANGED MY VIEW THAT US INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES, IN TERMS OF REGIONAL STABILIZATION, POLITICAL AMELIORATION, HUMANITARIANISM, AND COMMERCIAL ACCESS, WILL EVENTUALLY BE SERVED BY INITIATION OF A MODEST AID PROGRAM. REGIME LEADERS ARE CLEARLY MIFFED BY US DETACHMENT FROM BURUNDI DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, AND THIS COULD BECOME A HANDICAP LATER ON WHEN THE US WILL HAVE MORE SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST TO PROTECT THAN NOW. THUS, I BELIEVE THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH SHOULD INTERNALLY MOVE TO A NON-PUBLICIZED DECISION IN PRINCIPLE THAT, AT SOME APPROPRIATE TIME, PERHAPS LATER THIS YEAR, A SUITABLE AID EFFORT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN HERE. IT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE, PUBLIC HEALTH, OR SOME OTHER FIELD AFFECTING THE MASSES.

3. THE TIME TO START A PROGRAM IS NOT RPT NOT RIGHT AWAY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS DISCUSSED BELOW. YET, MY KNOWLEDGE OF A US DECISION IN PRINCIPLE TO GO AHEAD SOME TIME WOULD MAKE IT MUCH EASIER AND SAFER FOR EMBASSY OFFICERS TO ENGAGE IN CARROT AND STICK TACTICS OF TRYING TO INDUCE MORE INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE CONDUCT FROM THE BURUNDI REGIME IN SEVERAL AREAS, BY MEANS OF US HINTS THAT IMPROVED BEHAVIOR COULD BE VERY WORTHWHILE AND CONTINUED OBDURACY VERY COSTLY. THE AIM WOULD BE TO ENSURE THAT ALL SENIOR ESTABLISHMENT TYPES UNDERSTAND THAT THE BURUNDI GOVT WILL HAVE TO BEGIN TO SHAPE UP IN A NUMBER OF FIELDS, WHICH CAUSE US DISTRESS, IF THE REGIME IS REALISTICALLY TO HOPE TO HAVE NOT ONLY SOME DIRECT US AID, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY(1)US BACKING FOR AN IMF AGREEMENT, PROBABLY IN 1975, TO RESCUE BURUNDI FROM FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVE BANKRUPCY, (2) US SUPPORT IN THE IBRD FOR EVENTUAL NICKEL

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PROJECT LOANS FROM THE WORLD BANK, AND(3) POSSIBLY SYMPATHETIC EXIM CONSIDERATION OF EVENTUAL CREDITS FOR MACHINERY SUPPLY FOR THE PROJECT. THERE IS EVEN THE POINT OF WHETHER USG WILL MAINTAIN A NEUTRAL ATTITUDE, AS HERETOFORE, OR WILL INSTEAD SHIFT TO A POLICY OF USING ITS UNDOUBTED INFLUENCE TO OPPOSE TEMPELSMAN NICKEL CONSORTIUM EFFORTS, REF (D), ON WHICH OUR LEVERAGE COULD BE SUBSTANTIAL, SINCE NO COMPETING CONSORTIUM GROUP OF NICKEL DEVELOPERS SEEMS TO BE IN PROSPECT.

4. FIRST AMONG PROBLEMS IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD ADDRESSED BY
REF (E). AN HONEST REPORT BY FEB 28 DEADLINE ON BURUNDI
PRACTICES IN THIS DOMAIN WILL HAVE TO SAY THAT THIS IS NOT ONLY
A NASTY AND ARBITRARY LITTLE ONE-MAN DICTATORSHIP, WITH
NOT EVEN A FIG LEAF OF DEMOCRATIC OR BROADLY CONSULTATIVE
SHADOW INSTITUTIONS, BUT ALSO THAT THE POLICE AND JUDICIAL
SYSTEMS ARE GENERALLY CAPRICIOUS AND CORRUPT,
THAT PEOPLE ARE ARRESTED AND HELD INDEFINITELY WITHOUT TRIAL,
AND THAT BEATINGS (AND SOMETIMES DEATHS) BY POLICE ARE RATHER
COMMON. (OF COURSE, MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SOME
RECIPIENTS OF US AID, SHARE MANY OF THESE DEPLORABLE CHARACTERISTICS.

)

A MONOPOLY OF EFFECTIVE STATE POWER, DOMINATION OF VIRTUALLY ALL
POSITIONS OF WEALTH AND INFLUENCE, AND A PREPONDERANT HOLD ON
OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE YOUNG ARE ALL
FIRMLY IN THE HANDS OF THE 15 PERCENT TUTSI MINORITY, AND MORE
PARTICULARLY OF ITS TINY RULING CLIQUE. THERE IS FREEDOM OF
RELIGION, BUT HARDLY OF PRESS, ASSEMBLY, PETITION, OR PUBLIC
OPINION.

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EB-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05

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5. I HAVE DISCUSSED THESE PROBLEMS VERY FRANKLY WITH SEVERAL SENIOR ESTABLISHMENT FIGURES, INCLUDING TWO AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, WHO ARE EQUALLY APPALLED AT THE OPPRESSIVE NATURE OF THE REGIME AND AT ITS DENIAL OF OPPORTUNITIES TO THE HUTU MAJORITY. MEN OF THIS OUTLOOK ARE THE HOPE OF THE COUNTRY FOR RATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, EMERGENCE FROM THE TRAUMAS OF THE PAST, AND SOME CHANCE OF ETHNIC RECONCILIATION INSTEAD OF A BLOODBATH IN THE LONG-RUN WHENEVER ETHNIC TENSIONS AGAIN BOIL OVER.

SUCH MEN ARE FAR FROM NOW HAVING DECISIVE POLITICAL STRENGTH, SINCE THERE IS LITTLE SIGN THAT PRESIDENT MICOMBERO IN HIS INATTENTIVE AND OFTEN DISSIPATED STATE, ADDRESSES NATIONAL PROBLEMS IN THESE SUBSTANTIVE TERMS, BUT THEY ARE INCREASINGLY INFLUENTIAL AS ECONOMIC ISSUES COME TO DEMAND PRIORITY ATTENTION.

WITH THE RIGHT SORT OF DISCREET OUTSIDE PRESSURES ON BURUNDI, THEIR HANDS MIGHT BE STRENGTHENED, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF US AID, PLUS US SUPPORT BOTH FOR IBRD AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN THE MINERALS FIELD AND FOR IBRD AID TO THE PROJECT, MIGHT DEVELOP INTO AN IMPORTANT LEVER, ESPECIALLY IF USE OF LOANS AND SUPPORT WERE TAILORED TO ENCOURAGE BROADER HUTU PARTICIPATION IN A GROWING ECONOMY.

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6. SECOND BOTHERSOME AREA IS FOREIGN POLICY RHETORIC AND UN BEHAVIOR. I HAVE NOTED SEVERAL TIMES, PARAS 7 TO 10 OF REF (F), THAT BURUNDI'S ALIGNMENT WITH EAST ASIAN COMMUNISTS IS SHEER OPPORTUNISM WITH NO IMPORTANT DOMESTIC CONNOTATIONS, AND THAT ITS SOLIDARITY WITH THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC POSITIONS AND IRRESPONSIBILITY ON OTHER UN QUESTIONS ARE UNDERSTANDABLE IN AFRICAN TERMS. NEVERTHELESS, WHEN EVERY ADDITIONAL VOTE FOR OR AGAINST US COUNTS ON VIETNAM, CAMBODIAN, AND KOREAN ISSUES, IT IS HARD TO SWALLOW BURUNDI'S

BLITHES INDIFFERENCE TO US INTERESTS. MOREOVER, THIS IS COMPOUNDED BY OCCASIONAL OUTBURSTS HERE IN SUCH LOCAL PRESS AS EXISTS ON "AMERICAN IMPERIALISM" OR "AGGRESSION" IN KOREA, INDOCHINA, OR LATIN AMERICA. ON THIS TOO, I HAVE OCCASIONALLY POINTED OUT TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER SENIOR PEOPLE THE ANOMALY OF BURUNDI'S EXPECTATIONS FOR SUPPORT FROM THE US WHEN THERE IS NOT RPT NOT EVEN A WHIFF OF NEUTRALITY, MUCH LESS RECIPROCITY FROM THE BURUNDI SIDE. I WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IN MAKING THIS POINT MORE OFTEN AND MORE FORCEFULLY IF I KNEW THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO REWARD IMPROVED BURUNDI CONDUCT.

7. THIRD CURRENT DIFFICULTY IS MORE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF BURUNDI GOVT INABILITY TO PULL ITSELF TOGETHER SUFFICIENTLY EVEN TO ACT ON TWO MODEST AID PROPOSALS WHICH WE CURRENTLY HAVE BEFORE THEM. ONE CONCERNS START OF SMALL PEACE CORPS PROGRAM OF ENGLISH TEACHING, WHICH IS MUCH DESIRED BY OPERATIONAL SCHOOL OFFICIALS AT SECONDARY AND UNIVERSITY LEVEL, BUT WHICH HAS GOTTEN NO RESPONSE FROM TOP OFFICIALS OF EITHER EDUCATION OR FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRIES DESPITE MY REPEATED INTERVENTIONS. OTHER CONCERNS SELF-HELP PROJECT TO

BUILD TWO RURAL MATERNITY CLINICS, WHICH HAS SUFFERED FROM
INEFFICIENCY AND INDIFFERENCE OF HEALTH AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRIES

FOR ALMOST A YEAR, SINCE THE PROJECT'S REVIVAL IN 1974. FINAL STRAW
WAS FONOFF'S REFUSAL TO LET ME ON JAN 24 VISIT BURURI, TENTATIVE SITE
OF ONE CLINIC, IN ATTEMPT TO EXPEDITE IMPLEMENTATION. I HAVE SINCE
LET BOTH MINISTRIES KNOW THAT I WILL TAKE NO FURTHER INITIATIVE IN THIS

MATTER, BUT WAIT PASSIVELY FOR SOME SIGN OF BURUNDI LIFE AND
INTEREST. I INTEND TO FOLLOW SAME COURSE ON PEACE CORPS, AND, UNTIL
SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THIS SITUATION OF INACTION (WHICH IS ADMITTEDLY
ALSO OFTEN EXPERIENCED BY OTHER AND MUCH MORE IMPORTANT DONORS), IT
WOULD BE WRONG TO RUSH IN WITH OFFERS OF MORE SUBSTANTIAL AID.
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8. FINAL PROBLEM IS GENERAL BURUNDI ATTITUDE TO FOREIGN DIPLOMATS,
FROM AT LEAST CERTAIN COUNTRIES, CURRENTLY INCLUDING US. AS
EPITOMIZED BY REIMPOSITION OF SEVERE TRAVEL CONTROLS, REF (G). TO
BE SURE, THIS AN ASPECT OF GENERALLY UNSAVORY CHARACTER OF REGIME
ALREADY NOTED. HOWEVER, IT CAN BE CURED MUCH MORE READILY WITHOUT
ANY THREAT TO REGIME'S DOMESTIC CONTROL. AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, I
FIND IT TOO INCONGRUOUS TO ACCORD SUBSTANTIAL AID TO A COUNTRY WHICH
TREATS OUR (AND ALL OTHER) DIPLOMATS AS DANGEROUS SUBVERSIVES,
WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ROAMING THE WORLD HAT IN HAND.
REF (G) SUGGESTS CONSIDERATION OF RECIPROCAL TREATMENT OF BURUNDI
DIPLOMATS IN THE US, BUT IN MY NOTE OF PROTEST, I AM ALSO MAKING
THE BROADER POINT OF LINKAGE BETWEEN AID AND TREATMENT OF DIPLOMATS
IN BURUNDI.

9. I CAN HEAR DEPT WONDERING ALOUD WHETHER BURUNDI IS WORTH THE
TROUBLE OF A CARROT AND STICK TREATMENT TO INDUCE MORE
RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTAL CONDUCT. I THINK THAT IT IS, NOT ONLY
BECAUSE IT IS A POTENTIAL SITE FOR MAJOR US INVESTMENT, BUT
ALSO BECAUSE IT IS THE BEST HOPE FOR AVOIDING ANOTHER BLOODBATH
IN THE LONG TERM AND FOR HELPING TO STRENGTHEN THE HANDS OF
RELATIVELY MODERATE TUTSIS WHO, IF IN POWER, WOULD NOT ONLY SEEK
ETHNIC CONCILIATION, BUT ALSO PROBABLY TAKE MORE GENUINELY
NEUTRAL FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS.
MARK

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